

## [Juanita Hermandes Garcia]

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Range-lore

Ruby Mosley

San Angelo, Texas

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RANGE-LORE

"Me was born in old Mexico, me have 67 years," says Juanita Hermandes Garcia, of San Angelo, Texas.

"Me came with me father and mother to Texas when me have 6 years. Me family collected our possessions to make ready for transport to Texas. We put a burro to a two wheel cart and had one burro for the pack. This was one very good way to make the trip, in that time many people no have the cart. Me family transported at Del Rio, make the travel two days and make the camp for three weeks. The place make ideal for cook, scrub the clothes, rest and make ready to continue the trip. This was free country, everything free, pecans, wood, water, wild meat; make the trip with no much money.

"(Una dia) one day, heap muchos Indians make come to our camp, fell from horses, brought meat from wild animals to make trade to me madre (my mother) for Mexican food. C12 - Texas 2 Me mother been make the tortillas and tamales for one whole week, to finish the trip, Indians take all and leave wild meat, she make afraid they take me.

"All of me family had plenty light complexion pero me madre y mio (except mother and I). Me father had all Spanish blood, make the home in Spain when he baby, tienen ojos asule

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y palo blanco (he had blue eyes and light hair). The big chief no like me father, no talk with him. They say all time, me little Indian girl, make me ride the back every day when come for trade, me make scare most to die, some day make carry way me to live with Indians. All time Indians bring presents para me (presents for me). One time make bring a pair of moccasins very pretty; make the pretty little beads trim, me save this little shoes long time, they all time make give presents to me, no like other ninos (little girls).

“Me family no make the know what to do, make scare of Indian make kill if leave, make kill if stay, all family almost make die of fright when see Indians. The big bunch Indians make fast ride on wild horses by our camp, make show natural born riders, we make scare and run and hide to save life. We no make the know of the harm from Indians, they make plenty scare all time, no make the fight.

“Well, me make the trip safe to this Concho Country, look pretty good to me family, all people work, make plenty money to buy food. Many things make free, no need much money. We lived in a little house down by the river where 3 we make the Santa Fe park today. We got some more scare for life, negro soldiers from Fort Concho come near our house to make practice for shooting with guns. They throw whisky and drinking bottles high in the air and shoot them in pieces before the fall on the earth. We make run, hide, peep from little holes; they might shoot us. They no care for Mexican people, shoot Mexican as shoot animal.

“Nuestros tienen muchos amigos (we had many friends) when come to this country: Millspaugh, Sanderson, Veck, Metcalfe, Taylor and Mr. Nelson, this man make first market and store in San Angelo.

“White men say my father make good respectable person, no make the difference in race or color if work hard, make honest living for big family, no steal. Me father work for self most time no like the boss, all time tell wrong things, he won't to do good. He cut the wood

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and sold from Jack Miles's place, he make the farm on Metcalfe's place. He plenty good working man.

"When I was big girl I make the marry with Mr. Garcia. We move on the Joe Eddie Hall's ranch to make work. Me husband good ranch hand, make good ride on wild horses and do all ranch duties expected of ranch men. We make home there many years, my husband make head man. Mr. Hall and family go for long time vacation, me husband make charge of ranch, me take the house and do cooking. Me make good cook for ranch and big families, me no cook American style, no like 4 to eat American food. The cowboys all time make say they like me to cook, make good tamales and all Mexican food. Then I make a try plenty hard to please them so they tell me a good cook. I want make tell something, Mexican people want more than anything for courtesy, compliments and kindness, this make secret when make deal with Mexican people.

"George Hay (a present banker with Central National Bank) leased Monroe's ranch on the Pecos River, he gave little more money and gave me the cook job on the ranch, we make \$150.00 per month. That's bad place to live, wild people, kill people, take money, take valuables, anything mean. The ranch hands all time say, 'Outlaw,' yo no sabe (I didn't understand), me soon make know, they make talk outlaw kill man, steal, cut fence. I got scare plenty time no sleep on the night, work all day, make sick on the head. Me husband brought me to San Angelo, he return for the work long time. He make too much heavy work, got sick on the back, came home, make sit in the chair all time 'til die.

"We make a little save on the ranch money, put up little business, make hot tamales, enchilada and pecan candy. Pecans all time free, we make wholesale, retail and peddle Mexican foods.

"Me husband make pretty good artist with the hide from cow and a thread call zephyr. The ranchmen bring the hide, my husband make what he tell like ropes, girths, blacksnakes,

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bridles and harness of plenty kinds. Me husband make the 5 hide to leather then to merchandise. Everbody say he make the best leather man in Texas.

“When me husband die ranch men come tell me good man gone. They no like for him to die, he make many things no man make like. Ranchmen all time buy from me, they leave order me fill for Mexican supper. They tell me good things, me work hard, make good business.

“Me no citizen de Unita Estatus (of United States), no have same like the citizen, no get pension, no have money but \$1.70 per week to make live, good people of San Angelo City give to me. Me father, me family, me husband give life for this good country, me work all life here but no get nothing but good talk and \$1.70 per week. Me tell Mexicans if live here, get citizenship papers, make better to live.” Range-lore

Ruby Mosley

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### BIBLIOGRAPHY

Juanita Garcia, San Angelo, Texas, interviewed February 18, 1938.